

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK**COUNCIL**

Minutes from the Meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 19th January, 2017 at 6.30 pm in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillor D Whitby (Chairman)
Councillors Miss L Bambridge, P Beal, A Beales, R Bird, R Blunt, Mrs C Bower, A Bubb, Mrs J Collingham, J Collop, Mrs S Collop, N Daubney, I Devereux, Mrs S Fraser, P Gidney, R Groom, G Hipperson, P Hodson, M Hopkins, M Chenery of Horsburgh, Lord Howard, M Howland, C Joyce, P Kunes, A Lawrence, B Long, C Manning, Mrs K Mellish, J Moriarty, A Morrison, Mrs E Nockolds, T Parish, M Peake, D Pope, C Sampson, T Smith, M Storey, Councillor Tim Tilbrook, A Tyler, G Wareham, Mrs E Watson, A White, Mrs M Wilkinson, Mrs A Wright and Mrs S Young

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Anota, B Ayres, Mrs S Buck, C J Crofts, I Gourlay, H Humphrey, G McGuinness, G Middleton, P Rochford, Miss S Sandell, Mrs V Spikings, Mrs S Squire, D Tyler, Mrs J Westrop and T Wing-Pentelow

C:60 **PRAYERS**

Prayers were said by Father Ling.

C:61 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 November 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

C:62 **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Councillor A Beales declared a pecuniary interest in CAB103: CIL Result of Examination. He was not present for consideration of the item.

Councillors J and S Collop declared pecuniary interests in item CAB98 Council Tax Support Scheme. They were advised by the Monitoring Officer that their interest was not pecuniary.

C:63 **MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

C:64 **URGENT BUSINESS**

None

C:65 **PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

Under Standing Order 9 the Mayor invited Mrs Joanne Rust to ask the following public question:

Has there been an increase in the number of people contacting the council for support because of homelessness?

Mrs Rust's stated that as her question had been answered in the Cabinet Member's report she had a supplementary of if Councillor Lawrence could give any more information and what steps were being taken for an emergency shelter.

Councillor Lawrence explained that over the Christmas period emergency beds were made available for the homeless with all facilities, but no one had taken up those beds despite the fact being made widely known.

He confirmed there had been an increase across the different ways homelessness was measured between 2014/15 and 2015/16. It was likely that this trend would continue for the year ending 2016/17 based on the information recorded to date.

The homelessness strategy was the Councils plan for preventing homelessness. This was reviewed every year. The need to extend the options in relation to temporary accommodation was a particular priority to reduce the need to use inappropriate bed and breakfast options.

C:66 **CABINET MEMBERS REPORTS**

i **Development - Councillor R Blunt**

Councillor Blunt presented his report and in response to questions regarding the timing of the Local Plan Review Councillor Blunt stated that the production of a document was at least 8 months away, but the progress on it was available via the Task Group's minutes. The wording of "at least" used in the current plan was at the instruction of the Inspector. He also gave an overview of the work of the Custom and Self Build Task Group.

ii **Environment - Councillor I Devereux**

Councillor Devereux presented his report and in response to questions about the food waste bags which were sometimes splitting, he undertook to look into the situation.

In response to questions about funding required for beach recharges Councillor Devereux drew attention to the significant level of funding raised through the Community Interest Company and also announced that the Leader had negotiated funding in the region of £300,000 towards the beach recharging work along the coastline.

In response to a question on the level of food waste collected it was explained that except for the Christmas peak levels were dropping, probably due to different buying habits once the levels of waste were revealed. A report would shortly be forthcoming to the Environment and Community Panel for consideration on the matter.

iii **Housing and Community - Councillor A Lawrence**

Councillor Lawrence presented his report and in response to a question confirmed that any food parcels could still be delivered to the Purfleet Trust as he had not been told differently. In response to questions he praised the work of the Benjamin Trust which at their invitation he had recently visited, and he expressed concern regarding the potential reduction in its funding from its key funder.

Councillor Lawrence also gave information on some of the meetings he had attended and explained that with regard to the Community Housing Fund referred to in his report, at this stage officers were trying to identify land for the funding and to work with other councils to make the money go further, although at this stage the guidance on the fund was not clear.

In response to comments made about the Council's approach to solving the issue of rough sleepers, the Cabinet Member set out the Council's position and drew attention to the work being done in partnership with other agencies and organisations and the strategies in place to assist. He also reminded members that when rough sleepers didn't engage it couldn't be forced.

With regard to questions on public conveniences and press coverage Councillor Lawrence explained that he had been approached by the press for comments.

iv **Human Resources, Facilities and Shared Services - Councillor Mrs K Mellish**

Councillor Mellish presented her report. With regard to a question relating to a legacy left for the Crematorium and its potential use for the car park Councillor Mellish undertook to check the situation.

v **Regeneration - Councillor A Beales**

Councillor Beales presented his report and further informed Council that a draft deed had been received from Fields In Trust which officers would examine and work through. With regard to the media report about access to Lynnsport 1, the main access would be from the main road, and confirmation had been received from the Government's Planning Caseworker that the land at Lynnsport 3 was not considered an allotment so the work could progress as planned.

In response to a question on spend in Hunstanton following the McCarthy and Stone development, Councillor Beales confirmed that the general revenue work being carried out to access arrangements to the rear of the Princess Theatre and parking arrangements were being addressed which he considered good news for Hunstanton.

In response to questions on the new road and reported traffic congestion, Councillor Beales confirmed that when he had used the road it had flowed well, but that any issues should be reported and would be looked at, including the signage. He undertook to liaise regarding the issue of the road crossing.

vi **Systems and Economic Development - Councillor N J Daubney**

Councillor Daubney presented his report and in response to a question regarding the Economic Growth Strategy he explained that it was being developed and the work with the LEP was continuing despite the devolution rejection. He undertook to feed back whenever information was available.

vii **Deputy Leader and Culture Heritage and Health - Councillor Mrs E Nockolds**

Councillor Mrs Nockolds presented her report responded to questions about the archivist at the town hall, the number of grass cuts carried out across the Borough and the choices being faced by parishes of how they wished to proceed with grass cutting. The grass cutting proposals for the future would have no impact on Special Expenses in the town in the coming year. She also responded to a question on the coastal cycle path that it was a County responsibility.

viii **Leader and Environment - Councillor B Long**

Councillor Long presented his report and drew attention to the work carried out by all the agencies in readiness for the potential tidal surge the previous week, much of which was carried out in the middle of the night. He congratulated and thanked the teams.

In response to a question relating to the funding of WNDIS he confirmed a small grant was awarded to them by the Borough, but confirmed that no other contact had been made by the body. He confirmed that work was being done on a scheme to generate additional money for good causes which they could potentially bid for once set up.

Councillor Long explained the process for the Boundary Commission's review of the Council and confirmed it would not be carried out in the way it previously had, but that a briefing had been arranged for all Councillors immediately prior to the February Council. He also responded to questions of the recently scrapped positions of Deputy Cabinet Members.

C:67 **MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

None

C:68 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COUNCIL BODIES**

i **Cabinet: 6 December 2016**

The recommendations from the Cabinet meeting on 6 December 2016 were proposed by Councillor Long and seconded by Councillor Mrs Nockolds:

With regard to CAB98: Council Tax Discounts for Empty, Unfurnished and Uninhabitable Properties, Councillor C Joyce abstained on this decision disputing the legal advice which Members had been given on interests.

CAB99: Council Tax Support Scheme 2017/18. Councillor J Collop requested the information on other Council's positions to which it was explained that the information was available on the internet.

CAB103: CIL - Result of Examination, Councillor Bird Abstained wished his abstention from the vote to be recorded.

CAB106: Polling District and Polling Place Review, Councillor C Joyce wished his abstention from the vote to be recorded.

The following items were agreed without debate:

CAB101: Review of Financial Regulations

CAB102: Review of Hackney Carriage And Private Hire Licensing Procedures and Conditions

RESOLVED: That the recommendations from the Cabinet Meeting on 6 December 2016 be approved.

C:69

DETERMINATION OF COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS RELATING TO SECOND HOMES AND EMPTY DWELLINGS FOR 2017/2018

RESOLVED: That, under Section 11A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as enacted by Section 75 of the Local Government Act 2003, Section 11B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as enacted by Section 11 and Section 12 of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 and in accordance with the provisions of the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) Regulations 2003 and the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 the Council determines:

1. That the council tax discount for Second Homes defined as being within Class A of the Regulations is set at 0% for 2017/2018;
2. That the council tax discount for Second Homes as defined by Class B of the Regulations is set at 0% for 2017/2018;
3. That the council tax discount for Empty / Unfurnished dwellings defined as being within Class C of the Regulations is set at the following for 2017/2018:
 - a. 100% for one month starting on the day the dwelling becomes unfurnished; then
 - b. 0% once the one month period has expired;
4. That the council tax discount for Uninhabitable dwellings defined as being within Class D of the Regulations is set at the following for 2017/2018:
 - a. 25% for 12 months starting on the day the dwelling becomes uninhabitable; then
 - b. 0% once the 12 month period has expired;
5. That the levy rate for Long Term Empty Dwellings as defined in the Regulations is set at 50% for 2017/2018;

6. That any period of occupation of less than six weeks shall be disregarded when calculating the maximum period of a reduction or the start date of the Levy
- 7 That delegated authority be given to the Portfolio Holder for Resources in consultation with the Ward Member and the Chairman of the Resources and Performance Panel to consider individual applications to the Discretionary Hardship Fund
- 8 In accordance with Section 11A(6) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as enacted by Section 75 of the Local Government Act 2003 and the Local Government Finance Act 2012, these determinations shall be published in at least one newspaper circulating in West Norfolk before the end of the period of 21 days beginning with the date of the determinations.

The meeting closed at 7.55 pm